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West Winds

BY

JAY VEE

Author of "Wild Oats"
"Wakarusa Whispers," Etc.

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Cordially

To my Nephews and Nieces
Who are yet young.
Jay Vee.

THE EDITOR

I thought I heard a fellow say
This afternoon,
"Our editor is going away,"
"And pretty soon."

Let business men begin anew
To advertise,
Then all subscribers need to do
Is patronize.

He's going on a farm to plow,
It sounded queer,
We cannot spare the printer now,
We need him here.

He told of all that went away,
And all that came,
Recording every holiday,
And every game.

All important events and sports
Throughout the town,
All the church and school reports
He jotted down.

He told of every wedding near,
And every sale;
He boosted for improvements here
In Carbondale.

Our bachelors and spinsters, too,
Will miss the man,
Perhaps we'll have a printer new
Some baseball fan.

PASSING STRANGE

There are boys and men so tight,
In summer when the catfish bite,
They dig some bait and take their flight
To Wakarusa in the night,
And by the moon's uncertain light
They fight mosquitos there.

Strange it seems to us, and queer,
Individuals, even here,
Find no refreshment, fun, or cheer,
In any recreation near,
Without a cask or keg of beer,
Or bottled liquid air.

Not only here but every place
We daily find such is the case,
Natural to the human race,
And strange beyond compare.

COUNTING THE COST

I know a man and know him well,
  Who lives not very far from here,
Yet still his name I dare not tell,
  The consequences I should fear.

A gentleman of good report,
  Industrious and frugal too,
Fond of mirth provoking sport,
  Upright and honest, handsome too.

Men say, "He's older than he looks,"
  A bachelor, they say, in years,
Still fond of company and books,
  And of the ladies, bless the dears.

He seems as happy as a lark,
  And whistles when at work, 'tis said,
We often hear his friends remark,
  We wonder why he does not wed.

I called to visit him today,
And found him writing, quite alone,
And all I heard the fellow say,
Is still a secret of my own.

And in the name of common sense,
The man was talking of a wife,
And vainly counting the expense
And prospects of a married life.

The man supposed himself alone,
And quite aloud the words he spoke,
With many a sigh and many a groan,
Like one who cannot take a joke.

As one by one I heard him call,
It sounded like a bill of fare,
And long before he wrote it all,
I thought I heard the fellow swear.

And talking to himself aloud,
He said, I'll marry one that's poor,
For one that's wealthy, fair and proud
My company cannot endure.

Perhaps I'd better count the cost
Of boarding for I cannot batch,
And figure what I've gained and lost,
Before I try to strike a match.

While some are high and some are low,
Whatever the expense may be,
No boarding houses that I know
Can ever seem like home to me.

Perhaps I'd better sell my land
Or in advance collect the rents,
For all the cash I have on hand
Will fail to cover the expense.

To furnish my good house in town,
The items fill me with surprise,
As I proceed to jot them down,
I scarcely can believe my eyes.

So many things I call to mind,
Of woodenware, I count a score,
Nor have I counted all, I find
There still are twice as many more.

Of cutlery and hardware store
Again the list is doubled up,
Of queensware, half as many more
From sugar-bowl to mustache cup.

Now come the pictures, books and games,
And yet I have not counted half,
There's bric-a-brac and picture frames,
An organ and a phonograph.

An eight-day clock, a mirror, too,
Blanket, quilt and pillow case,
All must be as good as new,
And every article in place.

Carpets, curtains, cushions, rugs,
Tables, benches, chairs and stools,
Pans and buckets, jars and jugs,
Lawn mower and garden tools.

Towel, napkins, tablespread,
Cupboard, safe and kitchen range,
Sofa, lounge and folding bed,
Swings and hammocks for a change.

Enough! I am not married yet;
And I have figured up the cost
Would plunge me deeply into debt;
I'd rather be alone—and lost.

"Yet still I cannot quite decide,
I cannot bear to be alone,
It shocks my vanity and pride,"
Again I thought I heard him groan.

Again I thought I heard him swear
And mutter as he paced the floor,
I'll court some lady rich and fair,
Or be a bachelor evermore.

Again the fellow took a seat,
Jotting a few more figures down;
Then like a speculator, beat,
Upon his face there came a frown.

And then I saw the fellow rise
And place his hat upon his head,
"Perhaps I'd better advertise
For one to share my lot," he said.

And then he lighted a cigar,
And loudly to himself he spoke,
"Advertise in the Morning Star,
And be the victim of a joke."

And, stepping to the telephone,
He called the printer of the Star;
"Hello, old boy! I'm here alone,
Coming down on a trolley car."

Men say that figures never lie,
Yet many never cipher out,
Nor understand the reason why
Those single live in fear and doubt.

And when a match is made in haste,
Be sure he did not count the cost,
In such extravagance and waste,
Many a reckless man is lost.

DAD

You ask me to propose a health,
  Here's a new one for you, lad,
Apply to proverty or wealth,
  Here's to the good health of Dad!

When poets chant and sing of Dad
  In language like a vulgar roast,
Such I consider all too bad!
  So I propose this jolly toast.

I speak of your old Dad, and mine,
  Frequently I think of Dad
Requiring us to toe the line,
  Whipping us when very bad.

For all he punished you and I,
  We deserved it, acting bad,
We're glad he did not pass it by,
  Heaven bless our dear old Dad.

Choice of all I ever met,
North and south and east and west,
Dad's my chum and crony yet,
I consider Dad the best.

Whatever work we had to do,
Dad would always show us how,
Encourage us and help us, too,
In the field to hoe and plow.

Toiling with us, making hay,
Ever striving us to please,
Gladly joining us at play,
Teaching us our A. B. C's.

Our home was on a thrifty farm,
Kind to Mother, too, was Dad,
Protecting all of us from harm,
Cheering us when sick or sad.

Running with us girls and boys
To row a boat or fly a kite,
Making for us pretty toys,
Guarding o'er us day and night.

A good provider, too, was Dad,
Doing for us all he could,
Sharing with us all he had,
Diligently doing good.

The stock he owned were fat and fine
We've never seen their equal yet,
Sheep, cattle, horses, fowls and swine,
And every animal a pet.

When I was just about your age,
Feeling big enough to bust,
I thought my home a dismal cage,
Then I caught the wanderlust.

Since then I've traveled far and wide,
Over prairie, hill and plain,
And far beyond the Great Divide
I have sowed Wild Oats in vain.

Meanwhile, that good old Dad of mine,
Blest with courage, strength and health,
Labored hard in rain or shine,
Adding yearly to our wealth.

In civil war, a volunteer,
Marching to our country's call,
With cash and tidings full of cheer,
Dad provided for us all.

Courageously he played his part
With our country's flag at stake,
Yet still he was so good at heart,
Seldom would he kill a snake.

Upright and honest, speaking plain,
Always called a spade a spade,
So gallant, some would call him vain,
Dad was always on parade.

Your Dad was just as good as mine,
Perhaps he was as brave and strong;
Then roast no more, but toast the man,
And sing aloud your boasting song.

WEST SIDE

Landlady of the West Side House,
A tribute of respect to you;
May I regard your ladyship
A friend among a chosen few?

Far from the noise and smoke of town
'Mid rural scenes, I love to roam,
And I enjoy the rustic air
Of your delightful rural home.

Fair is the view at early morn
Of sunrise on a prairie land,
O'er grass and flowers growing wild,
No sight in town is half so grand.

The cars from town bring passengers,
Who gladly would thy freedom share,
They come to rusticate and breathe
The pure and free wild prairie air.

Your little boy may frolic here,
And chase the butterfly about,
Nor be a prisoner of the house
Afraid to laugh aloud or shout.

Upon the lawn are beds of flowers,
Flowering shrubs and leafy trees,
Tangled vines and shady bowers,
Singing birds and busy bees.

Each boarder at the West Side House
Enjoys the blessing of good health,
We envy not the city style,
Nor covet city men their wealth.

From Nature look to Nature's God,
Let prayer with thankfulness abound,
Praise the Lord for thy pleasant home,
And all the beauties that surround.

AT COLLEGE

Dear brother, while attending college,
Be still devoted to the Lord;
There is no other given knowledge
Like that imparted in His Word.

The elements of education
Your study and your time involve,
Yield not to evil inclination,
Nor break a single good resolve.

May you engage in no transaction
You cannot ask the Lord to bless,
Nor yield to any given faction
That makes you love your Saviour less.

With true devoted faith in Heaven,
The waves of sorrow roll away,
And darkest clouds of doubt are riven
Emitting light in full array.

PRAYER

Sweet converse with a friend,
When thoughts and feelings blend,
Will calm our thoughts of strife,
And sinful thoughts we quell,
When with the good we dwell,
And lead a righteous life.

While we in our pride
Through difficulties glide,
And many dangers dare;
Truly I believe
Blessings we receive
By earnest fervent prayer.

Those who love the Lord,
And heed His Holy Word,
Do not neglect to pray,
Let me in my youth
Listen to the truth,
And walk in wisdom's way.

MARGUERITE

Pansies, we can read your thoughts today,
While we search a name to rhyme with sweet,
Could you speak, I know that you would say,
"The only name will rhyme is Marguerite."

Roses, we may speak aloud to you,
Marguerite is six years old today,
To her party you're invited, too,
Help to decorate the parlor gay.

Sweet William! Listen to a whisper low,
You may come just looking as you are,
Because the little children love you so,
Come and twinkle, twinkle little star.

Your playmates now are coming, Marguerite,
This will be a bright and sunny day,
All are gay and happy, clean and sweet,
You may have a jolly time at play.

IRISH EYES

Come, Nannie, play at the organ for me
Some Irish tune that you know.
And do not look at me, if you please.
Irish eyes dazzle me so.

I should like to hear you warble and play
Some Irish song, if you can.
"Mulligan Guards," or "Emerald Isle."
Warble and play a tune, Nan.

You want me to write a rhyme for you?
Then what shall the subject be?
Give me a theme to write about,
Some object that I can see.

That is just like you, my roguish lass.
To me it is no surprise.
I think it will be a difficult task
To write about Irish eyes.

Allow me to continue the subject, then,
To Irish ladies' blue eyes.
There is a charm I cannot explain
About a girl of your size.

Your eyes are so bright, I venture to say
That you can see in the night.
I can almost hear them sing when you wink:
They fairly sparkle with light.

If ever I go to sea with a crew
In search of diamonds and pearls,
And want a few divers to help me too,
They all must be Irish girls.

I'd better be careful what I say.
My fancy is running wild.
Nannie chuckled me for what I had said,
Then looked in the glass and smiled.

OUT WEST

A farmer boy in Kansas state,
  Has written once or twice,
Whether or not to emigrate,
  Requesting my advice.

This is an arid, desert state,
  And rocky, I declare!
Where they fail to irrigate,
  The land is simply bare.

I've seen the mountains of the West
  I've seen the desert land,
I like the rolling prairie best,
  And deem it just as grand.

I loved the free, wild mountain air,
  But not the horned toad,
The rattlesnake or prickly pear
  That haunted my abode.

Upon a bed of gunny bags
Out on a ranch I slept,
Silently among the rags,
Sand lizards 'round me crept.

Awakened by the coyote's yelp,
Or by the burro's bray,
The hungry mountain lion's whelp,
Or prairie dogs at play.

Stay with your cattle, hogs and corn,
You have your job down pat,
Nor wish that you had ne'er been born,
Just stay where you are at.

You live upon the upper shelf,
With corn to sell next Fall,
So then brace up and count yourself,
Lucky to be born at all.

THE TIGHTWAD

The Tightwad leans upon his staff,
He's growing old,
And worships still the Golden Calf,
His idol's gold.

We wonder why he worships thus,
From day to day,
Like other men, the stingy cuss,
Will fade away.

No heathen in benighted lands,
That worship snakes,
Or idols with uplifted hands,
Make worse mistakes.

Then why not spend our money free
While we are here,
And exercise our charity,
With goodly cheer.

LEFT

In a crowded car on the Santa Fe,
I leisurely paced the aisle,
Trying vainly to find a vacant seat,
I journeyed many a mile.

Then pausing where sat a lady and child
Near the center of the car,
"Here is room for you," the lady said,
"Are you going very far?"

I am on a long journey, thank you, ma'am,
Weary, and now I can rest,
"I am on a long journey, too," she said,
"I am going away out West."

"This seat will serve for us three little ones,
We are not crowded, you see,
I have been so lonesome this afternoon,
For all are strangers to me."

"We brought a nice little basket of lunch
From Kansas City today,
You are welcome to a liberal share,
There's plenty to give away."

The shortest route to the heart of a man
Is by way of his appetite,
Perhaps this lady has won my love,
For I am hungry tonight.

Sandwich, doughnuts, apples and buns,
Candy, and honey and pie,
Only three for a basket full,
Lady and baby, and I.

I thank the lady and kiss her child,
Lucky man that I am,
Brakeman hurries to stop the train,
Shuts the door with a slam.

We hear the conductor loudly cry
The name of a western town,
"Twenty minutes for supper," he said,
And left us there with a frown.

"Union depot," the conductor cries,
And now we see him again,
"Change cars for south and west,
This is a Denver train."

Out of the window we see a crowd
Of hackmen, porters and boys,
Roughly jostling each other about,
Amid the music and noise.

"Right this way for the City Hotel,"
"Omnibus," "carriage" and "car,"
"Check your baggage," "shine your boots,"
"Evening Journal" and "Star."

Let them jostle each other about,
I am contented to stay
In the car with the lady and child,
Laughing and chatting so gay.

"There's a coffee house," the lady said,
"Please watch my baby a while;
A cup of coffee will keep me awake,"
She left us there with a smile.

"Be good, my darling, I know you will,
And with this gentleman stay."
A kiss for the child, a bow for me,
And quickly she hurried away.

A little girl of four summers or five,
Fair as a child could be,
Pretty and jolly, sparkling with mirth,
Left in the care of me.

Me, a bachelor, alone in the world,
With no companion or mate,
What if her mother should not return?
What would determine her fate?

Some of the passengers near us inquired
If I were a married man,
And in case I should fail in that attempt
Some asked what I would do, I replied,
"I will do the best I can."

"And if her mother should not return,
I will try to find her Pa,
And in case I should fail in that attempt,
I'll find her another Ma."

"Hurrah for you," a gentleman said,
"Young man I admire your pluck!
If you get left with a girl like that,
Consider yourself in luck."

"All aboard," we hear the conductor shout,
Our twenty minutes are past,
We hear the engine whistle, "off brakes,"
Our train is moving too fast.

"Oh, sir! Conductor, a lady is left!
Left me in care of her child!"
"Common occurrence," the conductor said,
"Quite common," and faintly smiled.

"Outwitted by a woman, you are,
Many a woman is mean,
Still to allow one to fool you thus,
You are evidently green."

"What will become of you, little maid?"
"I'll go," was her quick reply,
"To Colorado, with this good man,
And Ma will come by and by."

To acquaint myself with my pretty charge,
I found a difficult task,
She would answer in such a joking way,
The questions that I would ask.

"My mama's name is Miss Dorsty,
My name's Miss Dorsty, too,
I guess my papa's name is Mike,
I guess I will go with you."

She said she was going to see her Pa,
In Colorado some place.
She could not tell the name of the town,
But thought she would know his face.

She said her Pa was an Irishman,
And good as he could be.
And just about my size, she said,
Better looking than me.

The depot master in another town
Had agreed to hold our train
At my request, for the mother's sake,
And my own, to state it plain.

The following train, a section of ours,
  Was but twenty minutes late,
And the generous master had said
  He would have our section wait.

The lady came on the following train,
  Her child was laughing with glee,
We had travelled more than a hundred
    miles,
  Somebody's darling and me.

"Dear Mamma," she said, "we knew you
    would come,
  You left your satchel and fan,
And I thought you would not leave me
    alone
  All night, with this funny man."

The lady thanked me for what I had done,
  And kissed her sweet little child,
I told her that I was a bachelor,
  But she was married, she smiled.

She told me where she was going to live,
Requesting a visit, or call;
I cannot tell you all that she said,
I do not remember it all.

We met her husband the following day,
Who has an excellent wife;
She has an excellent husband, too,
I wish them a happy life.

SUNNYSIDE

At Sunnyside, my homestead,
In a cottage built of stone,
On South Dakota prairie,
I am keeping house alone.

While I am very lonesome here,
With nothing much to do,
No company but Rover;
Rover is lonesome, too.

My Esquimaux companion,
Like a savage, loves the chase,
Wild game is quite abundant,
And he often has a race.

I feed him good and plenty,
He is greedy as a hog.
His appetite was with him
When he ate a prairie dog.

That vagabond, the coyote,
Very often lurks around,
And where the ground is rocky
Ugly rattlesnakes abound.

This vast expanse of prairie,
Since the white man settled here,
Is made a land of plenty
By the sturdy pioneer.

The railroad locomotive,
And the tiller of the soil
Are on the reservation
With implements of toil.

A homestead on the Rosebud
Is property good to keep;
The land is quite productive,
The soil is rich and deep.

Buffalo grass and bluestem
Deck the hill and valley o'er,
And over all the prairie
Pretty roses bloom galore.

The grouse and prairie chicken,
The quail and meadow-lark,
May all be heard in summer
From dawn of day to dark.

I will cease complaining,
My dog is scolding me,
We may not be so lonesome
When the good Lord sets us free.

LADIES' AID

When I received an order to rustle,
Earn a dollar for Ladies' Aid,
My husband offered to help me hustle,
Soon our plans were neatly made.

Luckily no one came to meddle;
I baked some cookies, fresh and light,
And sent my husband out to peddle,
Now we have the dollar all right.

To please the man before he started
I gave him half a dozen to eat,
He promised me before we parted,
To collect full price, and not to cheat.

The sun was shining, the birds were singing
High overhead in the maple tree;
The bell in the schoolhouse tower ringing,
Never sounded more sweet to me.

He wore a cap, for the wind was blowing,
And overshoes, for the mud was deep,
I blest the man as I saw him going;
He did not sell my cookies cheap.

REVERIE

Alone tonight in my kitchen,
  Lazily poking the fire,
A bachelor, frigid and weary,
  Smoking a quiet cigar.

Reveries rise with smoke wreaths;
  Thoughts and memories jingle,
And I see in a vision,
  Ladies, married and single.

Lucretia married a merchant,
  Matilda married a clerk,
And they tell me Susan married
  A man too lazy to work.

Julia married an artist,
  They are on a wedding tour east,
And Ruth lives in a mansion,
  I attended the wedding feast.

Louisa went to the city
To learn the milliner's trade,
And Harriet lives with her sister,
Destined to be an old maid.

Edith and Alice and Charlotte,
Amanda, Olive and Rose,
Charmed by the lure of the footlights
Are traveling now with the shows.

Mary is now in a convent,
She's worth her weight in gold,
And Sadie married a farmer,
She's a widow now, I'm told.

I will light another cigar
To finish my reverie,
I'm a happier man by far
Than e'er I expected to be.

DRIFTING

Time like a stream is flowing,
The spring has come and gone;
The summer, too, is going,
Autumn is coming on.

We cannot tell the reason,
Sometimes we think it strange,
We gladly hail each season,
As constantly they change.

And like the seasons, shifting,
The men of every clime
Still constantly are drifting
Upon the wings of time.

Then let us be more careful
The present to employ,
Thankful as well as prayerful
For all that we enjoy.

SENTIMENTAL

"Hast thou numbered all the birds of the wood,
Without a gun?
Hast thou loved the wild rose,
And left it on its stalk?
Oh, be my friend and teach me to be thine."

—Emerson.

Foreword: The following sentiment, uttered sincerely, albeit with trepidation, is a parody that will be appreciated only by individuals endowed with sympathy.

Hast thou hunted without a gun,
A wild bird?
And in thy quest found her nest,
And left it undisturbed, and free?

Hast thou loved and caressed
A wild rose?
And left it on the bush for me to see?

Then I love thee! I say,
And would cheer thee, and stay,
And be near thee alway.

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